

U.S. Department of Education
2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Marion McCarthy

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Milton Avenue School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 16 Milton Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Chatham State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07928-2660

County Morris State School Code Number* 0785-060

Telephone 973-457-2508 Fax 973-457-2494

Web site/URL http://www.chatham-nj.org/mas E-mail mmcarthy@chatham-nj.org

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Michael LaSusa E-mail: mlasusa@chatham-nj.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Chatham Tel. 973-457-2500

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Thomas Belding
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- ☐ Urban or large central city
 - ☐ Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - ☒ Suburban
 - ☐ Small city or town in a rural area
 - ☐ Rural
3. 9 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	17	15	32
K	36	38	74
1	47	50	97
2	43	41	84
3	39	45	84
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total Students	182	189	371

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 7 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 83 % White
 - 7 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 5%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	371
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.046
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0
 Specify non-English languages:
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %
 Total number students who qualify: 5

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

9. Students receiving special education services: 16 %
38 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>13</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	17
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	10
Paraprofessionals	22
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	14

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes_ No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

PART III – SUMMARY

A sign hanging over our front door declares Milton Avenue School to be 'The Little School That Makes a Big Difference.' This little school, which opened its doors in 1949, is situated in a wooded setting that includes a picturesque pond. Our community of 371 learners includes children in pre-kindergarten to grade 3 and is located in Chatham, NJ, twenty miles from New York City.

At Milton, we believe that: 'Every person has value. Every person's actions affect the lives of others. Every person is able to make positive choices. Every person can make a difference.' Our mission statement reflects the belief of our entire Milton family. Administrators, supervisors, staff, and parents work closely to instill this belief in each child, empowering students to be the best they can be.

Children come to us from families in which education is a priority. Consequently, parental support is abundant in a variety of areas. Parents work hand in hand with teachers to decide which programs best serve the school community. They are eager to donate their time and expertise to the children. An active and involved PTO is the foundation for such programs as Art in the Classroom, the book fair, a Holiday Shop, after school enrichment programs, field trips, Theme Day activities, Field Day, and the reading incentive program. Consistently supportive of the teachers, the PTO provides for needs in the classrooms each year through the PTO Wish List, and by acknowledging the efforts of school staff during Staff Appreciation Week.

As the smallest of three elementary schools in The School District of the Chathams, we are part of a high achieving community and an academically rigorous school system. While Milton has traditionally produced exemplary test scores, teachers continue to strive to improve instruction and to maximize the potential of learners. A recent writing goal which spanned three years centered on improving writing instruction and performance on the NJASK. In addition to researching best practice in writing instruction and undergoing related staff development, teachers participated in regular "Teachers as Writers" exercises in order to personally experience the writing process. Milton has assumed an academic leadership role in the district's Basic Skills Instruction Program, which was developed by our principal and a Milton teacher, and has become the model for all elementary schools in the district due to its consistency and efficacy in providing services to eligible students.

Every available opportunity is taken to refine and reflect upon teaching. Faculty and weekly grade level meetings regularly include discussions of timely professional articles and best practice. Regular review of lesson plans by our principal leads to reflection, goal-oriented planning, and continued refinement of instruction. Never willing to accept that we are as good as we are going to get, we continue to strive for excellence.

Keeping in mind that education encompasses the whole child, our character education program is ongoing. Milton Avenue students are "bucket fillers." Based on the book *HAVE YOU FILLED A BUCKET TODAY?* by Carol McCloud, the program encourages children to use kind words and actions and to make positive choices. In addition, classroom teachers use the *SECOND STEP* program to develop skills for academic and social success. Classes initiate and participate in a variety of community service projects. Pennies for Puppies (for the Seeing Eye), Bridges, the Pajama Program, a clothing drive, and fund raisers for The Valerie Fund, an organization committed to serving children afflicted with cancer, serve as examples. Throughout the year children write letters to veterans and soldiers. Children leave Milton knowing that they can make a difference in the lives of others.

As an older school, Milton's traditions blend the old and the new, and highlight who we are as well as who we strive to be. The New Family Picnic in September welcomes all new families into the Milton community. The Halloween Parade has been enjoyed for years by everyone in the neighborhood. The holiday mitten tree in our lobby is a reminder to everyone who enters our front doors that we care for others. Family Fun Night and Field Day provide opportunities for just plain fun for everyone. Newer traditions include The Milton Mile and the Duathlon, open to Milton families and friends and designed to get us all moving. The time honored tradition of the Clap Out recognizes the graduating class on the last day of

school, and draws people from throughout the community. All of these traditions create a lifetime love for Milton, which many return to express years later.

In conclusion, Milton's goal is to equip children to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. The entire Milton community, including the students, works to achieve this goal. Blue Ribbon schools make a difference in the lives of their students. Milton Avenue School is 'The Little School That Makes a Big Difference.'

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

a) Milton Avenue School students participate in the required New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge. The NJASK is administered to students in grade 3 in the area of English Language Arts and Mathematics. Student raw scores are converted to scale scores ranging from 100 to 300. Based on the scale score, a student's performance is categorized as being Partially Proficient, Proficient, or Advanced Proficient. It is the expectation of the state, district and school that at minimum students will perform at the Proficient level.

Milton students consistently perform well on this standardized measure. Over the past five years, the school's mean scores in English Language Arts and Mathematics have exceeded state standards (with the exception of one ELA subtest in 2009 wherein the state mean score exceeded the school mean score by .2). Over the past five years, Milton students have consistently performed well on the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments with an average of 86% of the students performing in the Proficient or Advanced Proficient level in English Language Arts and 95% of the students performing at the Proficient or Advanced Proficient level in Mathematics. For the 2012-13 school year, 95% of the students performed at the Proficient or Advanced Proficient level in English Language Arts and 99% of the students performed at the Proficient or Advanced Proficient level in Mathematics (with 89% performing at the Advanced Proficient level). This strong performance is a result of engaged students who are eager to learn, an involved parent community and dedicated teachers who hold high expectations for all students and who consistently demonstrate a commitment to excellence. Students are administered the NJASK in grade 3; however, the Milton community views the effective instruction in preschool through grade 3 as contributing to students' solid performance on this assessment.

b) Over the past five years, Milton's grade 3 NJASK scores in Mathematics have been consistently strong. From 2008-09 to 2012-13, the percentage of students scoring at the Proficient and Advanced Proficient levels (Proficient) has remained high (96.0%, 96.4%, 92.2%, 93.0%, 99.0% respectively). Of 275 demographically similar schools in New Jersey, Milton had the third highest advanced proficiency rate in Mathematics in 2013. This solid performance is due to the implementation of effective instructional strategies, differentiated instruction, a rigorous curriculum with an emphasis on problem solving, and quality professional development.

The percentage of students scoring at the Proficient and Advanced Proficient levels in English Language Arts from the 2008-09 to the 2012-13 school years are as follows: 87.8%, 79.8%, 84.2%, 83.6%, 95.1%. In part, the decrease in the Proficient level percentage in 2009-10 was due to the new ELA tests that the state introduced at Grade 3. The new NJASK tests had modified designs, and consisted of greater numbers of items. The significant increase from 79.8% to 95.1% can be attributed to a number of factors. First, the school developed a school-wide writing goal beginning with the 2010-11 school year. The goal stated, 'By May 2013, Milton's mean score in writing will exceed that of the district and of the district factor group as measured by the NJASK.' Professional development, faculty meetings and the work of professional learning communities addressed writing instruction. All kindergarten through grade 3 teachers, including the art, music, physical education, health and media staff, incorporated writing into their programs. A validated and renewed focus on writing occurred with achievement of the goal in May, 2013.

Other factors that contributed to growth were in the area of reading. Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, there has been an emphasis on the reading of nonfiction text. Teachers focused on nonfiction text by conducting weekly reading conferences with students during time dedicated to reading nonfiction text, including newly purchased informational texts.

Staffing also contributed to the performance improvement. In 2012, a second Basic Skills teacher was added; more students who perform below the reading benchmark are able to receive support. Another contributing factor is the school's Response to Intervention program. The school employs a systematic approach to RtI that supports students who perform below the reading benchmark. The reading performance

of many students has risen due to the focused interventions and progress monitoring implemented by teachers. Differentiated reading instruction allows teachers to support struggling students and challenge those reading above the benchmark.

Recent ELA data indicates a gap between all students and special education students. However, six of the eight special education students scored at the Proficient level. Data also reveals a gap with the Other subgroup; three of these four students scored at the Proficient level. The latest Mathematics data indicates a gap with special education students; seven of these eight students scored at the Proficient level. Data also shows a gap with the Hispanic subgroup; five of six students scored at the Advanced Proficient level. While the state recognizes that a subgroup must include 30 students to be statistically significant, our goal is for all students to achieve at the Proficient level. To that end, work is underway to close these gaps. The Student Growth Objectives and Professional Development Plans of general and special education teachers focus on ELA and Mathematics. Close reading strategies, increased reading of nonfiction and an emphasis on problem solving support the implementation of the Common Core. Teachers work closely with district ELA, mathematics and special education supervisors to ensure instruction based on best practice.

2. Using Assessment Results:

A fundamental principle held by Milton teachers is that assessment, both formal and informal, is to be used to inform instruction as well as determine student progress. Teachers, therefore, utilize varied tools for a comprehensive, systematic, purposeful approach to assessment.

An assessment matrix outlines the schedule for the administration of English Language Arts assessments. Teachers administer the DEVELOPMENTAL READING ASSESSMENT (DRA) a minimum of three times per year. Each student's results are entered into the DRA Online Management System and used to identify student strengths and instructional needs. Additionally, results yielded from the administration of the WORDS THEIR WAY SPELLING INVENTORY and student performance on various writing tasks are collected and entered into an online data management system. Use of this system and the DRA system provides teachers with a broad and thorough view of each student's assessment history and progress. Teachers use rubrics provided in the DRA program to assess comprehension and fluency. For those students who are performing below the benchmark, teachers use DRA PROGRESS MONITORING materials to assess progress and identify needs for instruction. Teachers use assessment results to differentiate lessons during Guided Reading and Response to Intervention instruction.

The mathematics pacing guide includes the schedule for the administration of assessments and monthly standards-based problem-solving tasks. Students complete math assessments online using the Pearson Management System. The system's item analysis function identifies problematic test items for students that require remediation. Teachers administer pre-assessments for each math topic. Data is used to inform differentiated instruction. Teachers can further personalize learning through the management system by assigning tutorials to students based on need. Additionally, the management system provides each student with a homepage which includes a parent tab. Parents have access to all assessment results, games and tutorials. For struggling students, teachers utilize the Math Diagnosis and Intervention System to remediate skills and concepts.

Informal assessment strategies are used daily by teachers. Strategies to check for understanding, including exit tickets, whip shares or thumbs up/down, provide teachers with a quick assessment of the level of student understanding and help them to make decisions about the next instructional step. In addition, Milton teachers provide timely and specific feedback as a means to improve student performance. Students frequently participate in self-monitoring and self-reflection practices in order to assess their own learning progress and set goals.

Assessment data is analyzed routinely to identify students who are performing below math benchmarks. These students are referred to the Response to Intervention Committee, which develops an intervention plan for each student. Subsequent committee meetings are held to determine the effectiveness of the interventions and to monitor student progress.

Parents have access to online student progress reports. Student assessment results are discussed at parent

conferences. NJASK data is shared at PTO and Board of Education meetings to communicate academic achievement information and to report goals for improving student performance.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

One of the guiding principles of the district reads: 'Promote professional growth among our staff through ongoing collaboration, feedback, and self-reflection.' Consequently, the terms 'share what you know' and 'work collaboratively' apply not only to Milton students, but also to its teachers.

For the benefit of students, Milton teachers participate in the sharing of effective strategies and best practice. This collaboration is evident at the building and district levels. Team leaders meet weekly with the principal. The principal uses data from classroom observations to facilitate discussions with these teacher leaders about effective instructional practices. During team meetings and district grade level meetings, teachers exchange ideas about instructional resources and activities. Milton teachers communicate with colleagues about the needs of students and interventions that have proven to be successful with individuals or groups of students. At a recent district third grade meeting, a Milton teacher presented information about the implementation of Accountable Talk. This teacher had attended a workshop on this topic and has successfully implemented Accountable Talk strategies. Another third grade teacher collaborated with a district supervisor to present a workshop explaining her implementation of the Daily Five literacy practices, which are now used in classrooms across the district. Milton teachers also volunteer to develop curriculum documents for all content areas, providing standards-based activities, resources and strategies they have successfully implemented in their classrooms.

Milton has hosted numerous pre-service teachers in recent years, many of whom specifically requested to be placed at Milton. In support, teachers model and share effective instructional strategies with these pre-service and novice teachers. Additionally, all first-year teachers are assigned a mentor who shares professional experiences that support the novice teacher in developing essential skills and knowledge.

The music teacher successfully uses the SmartBoard and Smart Notebook. She recently presented several workshops for district colleagues to share how she incorporates these tools in designing effective and engaging instruction. The media specialist is collaborating with colleagues to develop a document of effective lessons that addresses the Common Core and the AASL Standards for 21st Century Learners. Sharing lessons learned also extends beyond the district. Milton's media specialist serves as president of the Morris County School Media Association. At meetings, she shares information about Milton's library program.

The Milton staff firmly believes that the sharing of effective strategies and best practice is a powerful means of promoting teachers' professional development and of enhancing student achievement.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Milton staff, families and the community work in partnership to enhance school climate and promote student success. The PTO plays an integral role in this partnership. Families who have moved into the community are welcomed to the school with an invitation from the PTO to the New Family Picnic. The PTO funds educational assemblies and field trips, and its after-school enrichment program allows students to explore interests by participating in a wide range of classes, including Sports and Games, LEGO Robotics, and Science Marvels. In addition, the PTO sponsors reading and birthday book programs. The school staff and PTO collaborate to inform the parent community about school and district programs and events by publishing a weekly newsletter and holding a monthly PTO meeting.

Milton families actively participate in their children's education. The Art in the Classroom program enlists parents to teach art appreciation lessons. Annual writing celebrations afford parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's writing achievements. On the annual Theme Day, parents present sessions that broaden student knowledge of varied topics including animal habitats, American history, and the fine arts. Parents attend events such as Back to School Night, information sessions and parent-teacher conferences to receive updates about instructional programs and student progress. Parents participate in the daily life of the

school by volunteering in the library and art classrooms, reading to students, and serving on the school's Safety Committee.

The success of Milton students is positively linked to the strong relationships that have been formed within the Chatham community. Each year students create cards of appreciation for local veterans and senior citizens, organize toy and clothing donations for children in need, and donate supplies to a local animal shelter. Local scout troops developed a butterfly garden and an outdoor classroom, both of which serve as unique learning environments. Our partnership with the public library provides Milton students with a summer reading program, encouraging them to develop lifelong reading habits. Additionally, the public library collaborates with the Milton librarian to present Family Night at the Library for first graders and their families.

Milton is fortunate to have a strong partnership with the Chatham Education Foundation (CEF). The CEF funds grants to teachers and administrators that support innovative educational programs and projects that enrich the instructional program. Recent grants funded the purchase of Dell Netbooks, a portable planetarium, and SECOND STEP, a program that supports social and academic success.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The goal of staff is to develop lifelong learners who are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. This is achieved through a relevant curriculum that is regularly reviewed and revised, thus ensuring it is based on current research and best practice. Rigorous standards, curriculum and instruction are linked to make certain that all Milton students have the opportunity to achieve high levels of excellence.

English Language Arts is taught using GOOD HABITS, GREAT READERS as the core reading program for Shared Reading and Guided Reading. Consistent with the Common Core, this program has a balance of fiction and nonfiction, used for teaching a rich array of strategies for decoding, fluency work, vocabulary development and reading comprehension. Lucy Calkins' UNITS OF STUDY is used as a resource for implementation of writing workshop with a focus on the writing process. The WORD STUDY IN ACTION PROGRAM focuses on patterns in written language. Together, these components enable teachers to deliver a balanced literacy program which allows students to become productive literate citizens of the 21st century.

The School District of the Chathams utilizes the district mathematics curriculum, which is aligned to the Common Core Standards. Pearson's ENVISIONMATH program, along with websites such as www.illustrativemathand www.mathplayground, provide teachers with rigorous problem solving resources that foster critical thinking and application of knowledge and skills. Students practice computational fluency on websites such as www.ixl.com and www.arcademics. Math instruction follows a concrete, pictorial, abstract progression. Teachers implement a guided-math framework that requires the use of assessment data to form differentiated groups to meet the needs of all learners.

The science curriculum is delivered through the utilization of research-based kits that allow students to explore each unit through a variety of hands-on experiences. Experiments are inquiry-based as students engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate. Teachers implement a district curriculum that is based on national and state standards.

The social studies curriculum is designed to prepare young learners to become knowledgeable, responsible and contributing citizens in a global society and to help them recognize the interdependence of the many peoples of the world. Students study families, neighborhoods, and communities. Basic map and globe skills, the study of America's heritage and the State of NJ are components of the elementary program.

The health curriculum is student-centered and interactive. The program provides the students with age appropriate information that supports the development of healthy behaviors.

The library curriculum is designed to ensure that students are effective users of ideas and information. The program fosters a love of reading and encourages lifelong learning.

The aim of the art program is to provide students with rich art experiences in a variety of media and techniques. Students explore the art of a range of cultures and time periods. Instruction fosters development of skills that support the student's social, intellectual, emotional and creative growth. Authentic self-expression of each individual child is emphasized. The program reinforces learning in other disciplines and teaches a love for the arts.

The music program is designed to provide students with experiences in music making. Students are encouraged to act as performers, creators, and musical thinkers as they develop skills which lead to a lifelong appreciation of music. Instruction in the elements of music, singing, movement, improvisation, aesthetics and the study of music from other cultures across all time periods are included. In addition to the general music class, third grade students have the opportunity to participate in the chorus and chimes ensembles. The third grade curriculum also includes a five-week unit on learning to play the recorder.

Through the physical education program, students develop motor skills, learn movement concepts, and

engage in experiences that improve personal fitness. Students acquire and use interpersonal skills and effective decision-making skills that will be determining factors in situations that include strategy, rules, sportsmanship, and safety.

Technology is an integral part of instruction and learning at Milton. All classrooms are equipped with an interactive SMARTBoard, a document camera and eight Dell Netbooks. Technology tools are used daily by students in the classroom or in the school's tech lab for various instructional activities including the administration of a math assessment, researching topics in science and social studies or composing a persuasive letter.

2. Reading/English:

a) The Milton Avenue School reading program is based on the best practices of the balanced literacy model including Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Independent Reading, Writing Workshop and Word Study. Our 2013 curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards. Materials encompass a wide selection of fiction and nonfiction texts. The gradual release of responsibility model is the method of instruction used at all grade levels for teaching reading skills.

Students' abilities range from those of emergent to fluent readers. Word-solving and comprehension strategies are taught during shared reading and are reinforced as needed within guided reading groups. By the end of third grade students know how to make predictions, activate prior knowledge, ask questions, make connections, make inferences, summarize and determine importance. Through literature, students expand their knowledge of text structure and genre including realistic fiction, fantasy, folk tales, myths, biography and informational text.

Emergent and early readers progress through the early stages of reading through the use of instructional strategies focused on the foundational skills as identified in the Common Core. Print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and the use of high-frequency words are all taught systematically within our balanced literacy program. One of the hallmarks of the Milton Avenue School Balanced Literacy Framework is a focus on phonemic awareness instruction through systematic instruction that includes a transition from concrete to symbolic and finally to abstract images. Teachers have been highly trained and educated through workshops provided by our elementary language arts supervisor and also through professional reading.

The DEVELOPMENTAL READING ASSESSMENT (DRA) and WORDS THEIR WAY spelling inventories are given to Milton Avenue School students three times a year. Data is collected and reported in online documents. This data collection enables us to identify strengths and weaknesses. Students who are below the benchmark are provided with supplementary instruction by our highly trained Basic Skills teachers who use additional progress monitoring tools, including the DRA PROGRESS MONITORING ASSESSMENT. IEP students who are below the reading benchmark are provided with intervention based on additional resources, including the Orton-Gillingham program. Students receive this instruction in small groups or individually. Additionally, some of our very able readers participate in the district ALL CHILDREN EXCEL program. These students are introduced to the Renzulli Profiler, which provides a wide range of resources for students based on their learning profiles.

3. Mathematics:

Milton is committed to developing mathematically proficient students who make sense of problems, persevere, model, query, reason, justify and critique the reasoning of others. Milton embraces a balanced-math approach that affords students the opportunity to work independently and in small and large groups on a variety of activities that develop conceptual understanding, computational fluency and application.

The district-adopted ENVISIONMATH program was selected by a committee of teachers after a six week pilot. This Common Core-aligned series was chosen based on its strong commitment to enhancing conceptual understanding through problem solving, use of technology, online testing, and the ability to personalize learning. ENVISIONMATH provides every student with his own homepage and a "To Do" list.

Teachers assign video tutorials and games specific to each child's needs. The ENVISIONMATH system also assigns tutorials to students based on assessment results. Item analysis is readily available and used to personalize learning.

Students in grades 1-3 receive sixty minutes of math instruction daily. Each lesson follows the research-based, proven method for teaching mathematics, i.e., the concrete, iconic, symbolic progression. Using a Guided Math framework, lessons begin with a real-life problem that students solve using manipulatives. A Visual Learning Animation that bridges students' concrete experiences with an iconic experience follows. Students then complete guided and independent practice which is followed by their participation in center activities and teacher-facilitated small group instruction focused on problem solving. Students work collaboratively to solve problems from websites such as illustrativemath.org, insidemathematics.org, mathplayground.com, PARCC, SMARTER BALANCE and EXEMPLARS. During center time, students visit websites such as IXL and ARCADEMICS to play math games that enhance computational fluency. Students take assessments online and complete district-wide standards-based word problems monthly. During professional development, teachers use task-specific rubrics and protocols to analyze student work. This process informs future instruction.

Teachers pre-assess each topic and use data to form instructional groups. Struggling students are identified by assessment criteria developed by teachers. Students who qualify for our Basic Skills Instruction program receive small group instruction until they are able to work independently and successfully in the mainstream. Students who compact out of a topic are introduced to the Renzulli Learning System. This interactive, online learning program focuses on individualized assessment of children's interests, preferred methods of engagement and self-directed learning.

Data analysis demonstrates that Milton's mathematics instruction has resulted in a consistent increase in the number of students scoring at the Advanced Proficient level on NJASK3.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The vision statement of Milton Avenue School states that students will develop capacities related to collaboration, critical thinking and communication skills so that they will eventually assume productive roles in our global society. In social studies, Milton Avenue School students engage in active, experiential and reflective exercises that guide them through a growing understanding of themselves as individuals and in contrast to others while exploring the different roles they play in the context of family/school (grades K-1), school/community (grade 2) and community/state (grade 3).

Looking at themselves and others through the lenses of "My Self," "My Place," and "My World," students learn that there are different expectations, purposes, and behaviors in these contexts. Although children themselves change over time, as do their families and their school, concepts like cooperation, communication and fairness have timeless value. Students explore these big ideas through lessons that include essential questions which guide students to a better understanding of who they are and what they will become. For example, in third grade classrooms, students reflect on change through questions that ask, "How has our state changed?" or "How have the changes in our state impacted our lives today?"

Learning is assessed through various authentic assessments as a way to better understand the complexities of decisions made. For example, students might write letters to General Washington in order to explain why they want to reenlist during the Revolutionary War, or why they cannot reenlist and need to go back to their families. Through discussion and the use of online resources, teachers are able to guide students away from questions that focus on themselves and their community to more global questions. Teachers use the resources of the TEACHTCI.COM online program to assist in the organization of information and ideas that support conversations.

The Common Core Standards for English Language Arts are integral to the success of the delivery of our social studies program. In particular, teachers have been trained in using Accountable Talk strategies, key to the development of collaborative conversations within this discipline. In addition, teachers use Dell Netbooks to tap into the resources offered by the internet, including HANGOUT NEW JERSEY and NEW

JERSEY HISTORY KIDS, which are both offered through the State of New Jersey website. Student work culminates with technology-developed projects including Power Point presentations and computer-generated brochures.

5. Instructional Methods:

In the words of Carol Ann Tomlinson, “Assessment is today’s means of understanding how to modify tomorrow’s instruction.” Milton teachers embrace this philosophy. Active planning leads to differentiation based on student needs and interests. Data from ELA and mathematics formative and summative assessments is used to inform instruction. Teachers' ongoing analysis of data is used to form small, flexible instructional groups. These groups provide the opportunity during guided reading and guided math for differentiated teaching that targets student needs. Using leveled texts, teachers are able to monitor the progress of struggling readers and challenge advanced readers during guided reading. With an emphasis on problem solving, guided math provides a structure for teachers to differentiate instruction as they reach and teach every student by scaffolding instruction and presenting content in a concrete, pictorial, abstract progression.

The Response to Intervention approach is used to maximize student achievement. The RtI Committee evaluates student data, discusses needs and brainstorms interventions to support at risk students. As teachers implement interventions, student progress is closely monitored to evaluate the efficacy of the interventions and to determine if additional interventions are warranted. Additional interventions may be implemented in the general education classroom or might include enrollment in Basic Skills or a recommendation for evaluation by the Child Study Team.

Milton encourages enrichment and extension of learning through after school offerings such as Chess, Lego Robotics, Reader's Theater, Mad Science and Technology. Additionally, third grade students participate in two academic competitions, Continental Math and Word Masters.

Milton teachers actively search for technology tools and websites that enhance and support learning in all content areas. The technology lab is equipped with a SMARTBoard and twenty-four computers. Students conduct research using teacher-selected websites to create PowerPoint presentations, compose stories and complete various other tech-related projects. Every Milton classroom is equipped with a SMARTBoard, document camera and eight Dell Netbooks. On a walk through Milton, one might observe first grade students viewing a math lesson online, second graders developing computational fluency with an online program such as ARACADEMICS, the music teacher using the SMARTBoard to display a manuscript by Beethoven while students listen to the accompanying symphony or a third grade class analyzing and discussing a writing sample displayed on the document camera.

Milton’s outdoor classroom provides an environment for students to experience authentic science. As “scientists,” students participate in investigations that focus on generating evidence, reflecting on knowledge and building models.

6. Professional Development:

The Milton staff strongly believes that quality professional development (PD) has resulted in increased student achievement. Our comprehensive approach is focused on enhancing pedagogical proficiency, addressing innovative instructional strategies and building on knowledge of best practices aligned to the CCSS for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Faculty and district meetings with supervisors provide PD in a variety of areas including a focus on the Standards for Mathematical Practices and the use of Accountable Talk to enhance opportunities for students to make conjectures, reason, construct arguments and critique the reasoning of others. In the area of ELA, these meetings afford training and resources related to the Key Shifts in the Common Core, including the use of close reading, text-dependent questions and complex text.

Consultants also provide meaningful PD. An ongoing relationship with a math consultant focuses on Common Core content, instructional strategies and pedagogy. Additionally, teachers have worked with a

literacy consultant in the implementation of Writing Workshop. In particular, this consultant provided information related to the standard for writing including text types, writing about reading, and the development of units of study.

In-house PD also impacts instruction and learning. This past year Grade 1, basic skills and special education teachers participated in a three-day PD workshop, 'When Readers Struggle', facilitated by district supervisors. This workshop provided training and resources that support student achievement in the area of reading. The workshop was designed to help struggling readers by recognizing their strengths through precise analysis of reading behaviors, meeting these students on their level of learning, and providing specific and intensive teaching that supports children in their development of foundational reading skills. The need to focus on foundational reading skills had been indicated as an area of need within assessment results from the DEVELOPMENTAL READING ASSESSMENT and also the WORDS THEIR WAY spelling inventories.

Administrators as well as teachers participate in relevant PD. At a recent national conference, the Milton principal attended a workshop on the implementation of the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice. Consequently, a professional resource on this topic was purchased for all teachers. A school-wide book study is underway in an effort to highlight the practices in Milton classrooms and shift instruction from a focus on content to a focus on application and understanding.

Ongoing, supportive, collaborative and job-embedded PD is a cornerstone of Milton that serves to transform instruction and increase student learning.

7. School Leadership

At Milton, leadership is a collaborative effort. Administrators, supervisors, and teachers all assume leadership roles, and strive to create a positive, respectful, nurturing environment in which children can thrive.

Our principal maintains rigorous standards and high expectations for both students and staff. She is focused on maximizing student learning and positive behavior. Frequent walk-throughs are the catalyst for meaningful conversations with faculty and students. These conversations result in reflection, development of best practice, and open lines of communication. In communicating with staff, our principal provides alternatives and suggestions for coping with a variety of issues and problems. Her solutions are thoughtful and creative.

As a lifelong learner, our principal readily shares professional articles with staff. Books promoting best practice are carefully selected and given to teachers; subsequent conversations and meeting topics focus on selected readings. Faculty meetings often include discussions about the implementation of best practices and structures to promote student engagement and understanding. Our principal is also supportive of teachers personally, helping to bridge home and school lives. She maintains an open-door policy, and does not hesitate to talk through issues with any staff or community member who seeks her counsel.

The creation of a community of learners is primary to our principal's leadership. She has instituted a morning message centered on the development of respect, Milton assemblies which gather the school community together and "grade level buddies" which pair younger and older students to work on a project.

Collaborative leadership at Milton includes Grade Level Team Leaders, the Child Study Team, the I&RS committee, and the RtI committee. These groups meet regularly and frequently to effectively address the academic and behavioral issues of Milton students, and to provide feedback and support to teachers. At the core of these groups are the classroom teachers. Feedback from staff is always taken into consideration and plays a key role in the development of accommodations for all learners. In addition, district curriculum supervisors provide pedagogical support and guidance in current developments within their disciplines.

The Milton community is led by a group of thoughtful, hard working, caring people dedicated to the success

of each Milton student. The talents and strengths of individuals are valued, recognized and put to work in order to create the best possible learning experience for every child.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Publisher:

Test:

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	99	93	92	96	96
% Advanced	89	65	60	61	51
Number of students tested	101	86	77	84	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	1	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		50			
% Advanced		50			
Number of students tested	0	2	0	0	0
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	88	75	78	100	85
% Advanced	50	42	33	70	23
Number of students tested	8	12	9	11	13
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	100	
% Advanced	100	0	0	0	
Number of students tested	1	1	1	4	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	83	67	0	100	100
% Advanced	83	67	0	20	0
Number of students tested	6	3	1	5	1
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			100	100	100
% Advanced			0	100	0
Number of students tested	0	0	2	1	2
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	100	100	100
% Advanced	100	75	80	75	50
Number of students tested	6	4	5	8	6
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					

% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	94	93	96	95
% Advanced	89	65	61	61	54
Number of students tested	85	78	69	71	65
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100			
% Advanced	75	0			
Number of students tested	4	1	0	0	0
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 3
Publisher:

Test:
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	95	84	84	80	88
% Advanced	15	7	8	14	5
Number of students tested	101	85	76	84	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	1	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		100			
% Advanced		0			
Number of students tested	0	2	0	0	0
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	75	42	44	70	62
% Advanced	13	0	0	10	0
Number of students tested	8	12	9	11	13
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	0	
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	
Number of students tested	1	0	0	4	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	67	0	20	100
% Advanced	0	0	0	20	0
Number of students tested	6	3	1	5	1
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			50	100	0
% Advanced			0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	2	1	2
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	100	88	100
% Advanced	17	0	0	25	0
Number of students tested	6	4	5	8	6
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	95	84	85	83	89
% Advanced	17	8	9	13	6
Number of students tested	85	77	68	71	65
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	75	0			
% Advanced	0	0			
Number of students tested	4	1	0	0	0
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: